

Message Text

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67

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, KN, JA, KS

SUBJECT: NORTH KOREAN SEIZURE OF JAPANESE FISHING BOAT

1. NORTH KOREAN SEIZURE OF JAPANESE FISHING BOAT IN NORTHERN YELLOW SEA HAS BEEN GIVEN HEAVY COVERAGE IN ROK PRESS. AN EDITORIAL IN THE KYONGHYANG SHINMUN SEPTEMBER 4 DENOUNCED THE NORTH KOREAN "ATROCITY" AND LINKED IT TO KIDNAPPING OF ROK FARMER IN DMZ AUGUST 26. EDITORIAL CHARACTERIZED SEIZURE AS FURTHER EFFORT TO COERCE JAPAN INTO SECEDING FROM ROK-US-JAPAN SECURITY SYSTEM. PAPER EXPRESSED HOPE JAPAN WILL DROP ITS ILLUSIONS ABOUT NORTH KOREA AND RE-ADJUST ITS POLICY BASED ON THE REALIZATION THAT NORTH KOREA WILL CONSTANTLY CREATE INCIDENTS LIKE THIS ONE WHICH WILL ULTIMATELY THREATEN BOTH JAPANESE AND SOUTH KOREAN SECURITY.

2. SEPTEMBER 5 MORNING PRESS CARRIED STORIES INDICATING JAPANESE ARE NOW CONCERNED THAT LACK OF OFFICIAL GOJ REPRESENTATION IN PYONGYANG WILL HAMPER EFFORTS TO SECURE RETURN OF FISHING BOAT AND FISHERMEN. AFTERNOON PAPERS FOLLOWED WITH EDITORIALS EXPRESSING GRAVE CONCERN OF POSSIBILITY THAT

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GOJ WILL REWARD NORTH KOREAN OUTRAGE BY ESTABLISHING

GOVERNMENT OFFICE IN PYONGYANG.

3. KOREA TIMES EDITORIAL SEPTEMBER 7 CONTEMPTUOUSLY
CHRACTERIZED JAPANESE REACTION AS AN "APPEASEMENT POLICY"
FOSTERED BY "SOME QUARTERS OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY" WHO
WANT TO OPEN GOVERNMENT-LEVEL CHANNEL TO PYONGYANG
UNDER THE PRETEXT THAT THIS WILL HELP SETTLE DISPUTES.
TIMES LINKED SWIFT ISSUANCE OF RE-ENTRY VISA TO
HAN TOK-SU, HEAD OF CHORYON (CHOSEN SOERN) TO FISHING
BOAT INCIDENT AND CONTRASTED THIS WITH THE "HIGH-HANDED
REACTION OF THE JAPANESE PRESS" TO ROK PROSECUTION OF TWO
JAPANESE YOUTHS ACCUSED OF PARTICIPATING IN AN ANTI-ROKG
CONSPIRACY. IN ACCOMPANYING NEWS REVIEW ARTICLE TIMES ANALYST
BANG TAI-YUNG CONCLUDED THAT GOJ WOULD HAVE LODGED
STRONG OR THREATENING PROTEST AND JAPANESE PRESS WOULD HAVE
REACTED ACRIMONIOUSLY AND VEHEMENTLY IF INCIDENT HAD BEEN
CAUSED BY ROK RATHER THAN DPRK.

COMMENT: AN IRRESOLUTE OR WEAK GOJ RESPONSE TO NORTH KOREAN
SEIZURE OF FISHING BOAT, OR EVEN WORSE, ANY OFFICIAL SIGN
THAT INCIDENT MIGHT LEAD TO CLOSER NORTH KOREA-JAPAN
RELATIONS WOULD SERIOUSLY IRRITATE ROKG.
SNEIDER

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